

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action dated December 9, 2009. Reconsideration and allowance of the application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2 and 5-14 are pending in the Application. Claims 3-4 are canceled herein, without prejudice. The Applicants respectfully reserve the right to reintroduce subject matter deleted herein, either at a later time during the prosecution of this application or any continuing applications. Claims 1, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 are independent claims.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 5-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,633,534 to Tosaki ("Tosaki"). Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Tosaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,236,727 to Ciacelli ("Ciacelli").

The Applicants want to thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 3 and 4 are allowable. The Applicants have elected to amend claims 1, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 to include the subject matter indicated as allowable in claims 3 and 4.

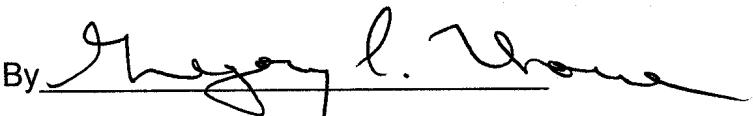
Based on the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 9-12 are patentable over Tosaki alone and in view of Ciacelli and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Claims 2-8 and 14 respectively depend from one of claims 1 and 13 and accordingly are allowable for at least this reason as well as for the separately patentable elements contained in each of the claims. Accordingly, separate consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicants deny any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections

and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicants reserve the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

Applicants have made a diligent and sincere effort to place this application in condition for immediate allowance and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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